

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

A newsletter dedicated to keeping Renton's communities informed

Issue 4, July 2009

City of Renton Neighborhood Program Wins National Honors



Mayor Denis Law with Liberty Ridge residents: Tom Winters, Tom Rowley, Veronica Smith-Casem & Michael Reyes

Participants of the City of Renton's Neighborhood Program have long known they were engaged in a positive community partnership. Now, the program is being recognized nationally for its excellence. The Neighborhood Program received two honors at the Neighborhoods, USA conference held in Spokane recently. Renton's Neighborhood Picnic Program received the second place award in the "Social Revitalization" category and the Liberty Ridge Playground Project, funded through the City's Neighborhood Grant Program, came in third place in the "Physical Revitalization/Beautification" category. Renton was the only city in the nation to have two finalists for this year's Neighborhoods, USA awards. Renton Mayor Denis Law received the awards from Neighborhood Program staff members Norma McQuiller and Wendy Kirchner at the June 8, meeting of the Renton City Council.

"We have known for a long time that the city's Neighborhood Program is an incredibly positive force in our community. This national recognition affirms the great work the city is doing in partnership with countless community leaders to strengthen our neighborhoods," said Mayor Denis Law.

Neighborhoods, USA (NUSA) is a national non-profit organization committed to building and strengthening neighborhood associations and promoting productive communications and collaborations between those organizations and the public and private sectors. NUSA was created in 1975 to share information and experiences toward building stronger communities. NUSA's

Neighborhood of the Year awards have been presented since 1984. They are the only national awards given on an ongoing basis to neighborhood organizations for their self-help initiatives. Selection of Neighborhood of the Year Award finalists and award winners was based on the degree to which the nominated project, in its unique neighborhood context, was innovative, overcame obstacles, mobilized

community resources and created partnerships between people of different ages, cultures or economic stature who might not ordinarily work together. More information is available at www.nusa.org.



Neighborhood Picnic Program



Norma McQuiller & Wendy Kirchner receiving awards from NUSA President, Elton Gatewood.

National Night Out Celebration

Tuesday, August 4, is National Night Out (NNO), a unique crime prevention event celebrated across the nation. The City of Renton is hosting National Night Out at the Highlands Community Center (800 Edmonds Ave NE) from 4 to 7:30pm. Enjoy food, fun, party hoppers and learn how to use a fire extinguisher properly!

The purpose behind NNO is to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships
- Send messages to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back



Last year's NNO crew preparing to serve hot dogs!

Along with the traditional display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils, some other ways your neighborhood can celebrate NNO are:

- Block parties
- Cookouts
- Visits from local police departments
- Flashlight walks

If your neighborhood would like to officially register for National Night Out, visit this website for your free application and package. Once registered, you will receive a free organizational kit filled with "how to" materials:

<http://www.nationaltownwatch.org/nno/reg.html>

It's Picnic Time!

The Neighborhood Program's picnic season got off to a roaring start on June 11 with the South Renton Neighborhood Association kick off picnic. The night was warm as 300 residents gathered at Burnett Linear Park for an evening of food and entertainment provided by the neighborhood jazz band, Unique Groove. Local youth dancers, 2Crew4You and Rain City Breakers (from Renton High School and Dimmitt Middle School), performed lively routines on a home-made dance floor and then taught some of the younger kids "the moves."



Renton High School dancers



Chalk art adorned Duvall Ave

Later in June, several neighborhoods congregated for a "Street Party" to celebrate the end of the road closures and detours on Duvall Avenue. Over 600 residents enjoyed delicious food, music and lots of live raffle items!

Kids decorated the street with chalk art, had water balloon tosses and played with bubbles. We're anticipating that the rest of the picnics will be filled with food, family, friends and fun...and of course helping Councilmember King Parker achieve his goal of serving 5,000 cups of lemonade!!

Councilmember Parker's tally after two picnics:

850

Tips for a Successful Picnic

Picnic season is here and that means food, fun, friends and games! Picnics are a great way to get to know your neighbors, become acquainted with City officials, discuss concerns and celebrate your neighborhood accomplishments. Each picnic is as unique as its neighborhood. Picnics can serve as a great tool to discover the resources in your neighborhood. Is there an artist who might like to do face painting? A musician who might be able to set up some entertainment? A local business (or) owner who could donate prizes or sponsor an activity? A sports enthusiast to run games? A neighborhood school group that enjoys volunteering? Use your picnics to get to know your neighbors and discover and use their talents!!



Face painting at the South Renton picnic

Here are some fun, yet simple ideas that many of our neighborhoods have come up with to make their picnics successful. Feel free to “recycle” these great ideas!

- **LaCrosse Neighborhood** decorates their picnic area in a tropical theme, uses a Tiki Bar to serve beverages and ends the evening with a fun candy game.
- **Renton Hill Neighborhood** contracted with a local business to sponsor an inflatable play structure for their picnic.
- **Victoria Park Neighborhood** has a “Bike Parade” during their picnic.
- **Tiffany Park Neighborhood** provided popcorn at their picnic with help from a resident who owns a popcorn machine.
- **Victoria Park** discovered that “Simon Says” was an engaging picnic game for all ages.
- **South Union Neighborhood** incorporated a “Water Balloon Toss” as a picnic activity.
- **Kennydale Neighborhood** hands out dinner plates when residents sign in and has local high school students help out with games.
- **North Renton Neighborhood** procures donated gift certificates from neighborhood businesses for raffle prizes.
- **Earlington Neighborhood** also holds a raffle at their picnic and prizes are home grown bouquets of flowers and baskets of produce grown by their residents.
- **South Renton Neighborhood** had an artist do face painting during their picnic.

Wanted: Favorite Picnic Pot Luck Recipes

Food is a very important component of neighborhood picnics. Food is comforting, fun to share and always has a story around it. It is always a joy to see what kinds of pot luck dishes each neighborhood spreads out! At the end of the picnic season the Neighborhood Program staff will be putting together an online cookbook of favorite picnic pot luck recipes. We ask that if you prepare a special dish for your picnic, to please include a recipe. We look forward to tasting your delicious dishes!!



Lots of yummy desserts at the Duvall Community Picnic!



Neighbor To Neighbor

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Renton Farmers Market Parking Hints

Farmers Market season is in full swing! New this year, the parking garage at the Transit Center is being managed by Diamond Parking. It is still free for the first two hours, but you need to register your car at the payment kiosks located by the exit doors. You can still park on the streets and in other public lots close by. The Renton Farmers Market is held at Renton Piazza (S 3rd & Burnett) on Tuesdays from 3 to 7pm (through September 15).

For further information, contact Stefeny Anderson, Farmers Market Coordinator, at 425-430-7214 or smanderson@rentonwa.gov.

You can also sign up for weekly emails with recipes, shopping guides, and events at www.rentonfarmersmarket.com.

IKEA Renton River Days Festival: 2009 Highlights

Wednesday, July 22, Kids' Day, 11am-5pm, Liberty Park

Thursday, July 23, Senior Day Picnic, Renton Community Center

Saturday, July 25, Parade

Begins at 10am on South 3rd St., Downtown Renton

Sunday, July 26, Rubber Ducky Derby

Launched from the Houser Street Bridge at 4:30pm

If your neighborhood is interested in being in the parade or you would like more information on the festival, please visit <http://rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=1138>

Shop Renton, Buy Ahead of the Curve with “CurveCards”

The City of Renton, Renton Chamber of Commerce and Renton Reporter have partnered together to kick off a new incentive to shop locally. The “Shop Renton, Buy Ahead of the Curve” campaign is an effort for individual Renton businesses to entice residents to shop at their establishments by offering a discount or special offer. Businesses who are participating in the Shop Renton campaign are displaying a “**Shop Renton**” decal in the window of their business. By posting the decal, they are committing to offering their customers who present a “**CurveCard**” a discount or special offer. **Just flash your CurveCard and save—it’s that simple!** That’s the best part, **it’s free!** Just look for the CurveCard decal in business windows, and ask for your CurveCard discount or offer.

CurveCards were recently inserted in the Renton Reporter. They will also be available through City and Chamber events, including Renton River Days. If you have questions, please call 425-430-6582 or email dcad@rentonwa.gov. You may also pick them up on the 1st Floor at Renton City Hall (1055 South Grady Way) or at the Renton Chamber of Commerce (300 Rainier Avenue North).